



## THE CARVER THEATRE SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy applies to all members of The Carver Theatre, the board of trustees, executive committee members, theatre members, and volunteers, with guidance from the NSPCC and is based on the laws that seek to protect children, namely:

- Children And Young Persons Act 1963
- Child (Performances) Regulations 1968
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Protection Of Children Act 1999
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
- Children Act 2004
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Working together to safeguard children 2018

### **We believe that:**

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

### **We recognise that:**

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents and carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

### **We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:**

- valuing, listening to, and respecting them
- appointing a designated safeguarding lead for children and young people, and a lead member of the executive committee for safeguarding
  - adopting safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for all members and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for all members and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all members and volunteers understand and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance

- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, and group discussions
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against members and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where members and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

The Society has two dedicated Safeguarding Officers who oversee and ensure that the Safeguarding policy and procedures are adhered to. These are:

- A member of the society with experience and training in child protection and safeguarding procedures.
- The Chairperson of the Society

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead for The Carver Theatre is:- Joanne Smith**

**Contact email:safeguarding@carvertheatre.co.uk**

**Support Services and Contact Telephone Numbers:**

- Local Authority Children’s Social Care Team/MASSH – 0161 217 6028
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 0161 474 5657
- Local Authority Out of Hours Team – 0161 718 2118
- NSPCC – 0808 800 5000
- Emergency Police – 999
- Non-Emergency Police 101

## **SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES**

### **Responsibilities and Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

#### **Responsibilities**

- dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- managing allegations against members and volunteers
- recording concerns and information sharing (where appropriate)
- safeguarding records retention and storage
- code of conduct for members and volunteers
- behaviour codes for children and young people
- photography and sharing images guidance
- safer recruitment
- online safety
- anti-bullying
- managing complaints
- whistleblowing

#### **For any production involving children the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:**

- Ensure an Adults Production Register is completed (Appendix 1).
- Issue a copy of the Society's Code of Good Practice For Working with Young People to all adults on the production (Appendix 2).
- Identify at the outset a Lead Chaperone who will have responsibility for safeguarding for the duration of the production process, including nominating deputies when unable to attend workshops, rehearsals or productions. However, please note the following:
  1. Children and young people who are capable of acting as stage crew are regarded as sufficiently mature and responsible to not need chaperoning. Therefore the Stage Manager will take overall responsibility for safeguarding children and young people aged under 16 who are part of the stage crew.
  2. Rehearsals for principals often take place separately from the chorus and are unlikely to be attended by chaperones. In those rehearsals, therefore, the Show Director will take overall responsibility for safeguarding children and young people aged under 16 who have principal roles.
- Ensure the Director, Lead Chaperone and Stage Manager undertake risk assessments on pre-populated Risk Assessment Grids (Appendix 3) prior to cast selection, prior to on stage rehearsals and prior to dress rehearsals, as there will be new risks posed at each of these stages and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Ensure the Lead Chaperone collects forms covering Medical Questionnaire, Behaviour Contract and Code of Conduct, and Photography (Appendix 4) completed by parents/guardians for all children and makes this information accessible to deputies as appropriate.

- Engage in effective recruitment of other chaperones with responsibility for children, including vetting where necessary.
- Ensure the chaperone role is not combined with any other responsibilities on the production.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services.

## **Parents**

- The Society believes it is important that there is a partnership between parents and the Society. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the Society and to share responsibility for the care of children. All parents will be given a leaflet explaining the Society's Policy and the parents' role in that. A copy of the Society's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be made available to parents.
- Parents and children will be required to sign a Behaviour Contract & Code of Conduct Agreement with the Society (Appendix 4).
- Parents will be required to sign a Photography Agreement (Appendix 4).
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection) of their children after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of the society to take children home.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that the education of their children does not suffer due to rehearsals or performance and this includes keeping up with homework and full-time attendance at school.

## **Codes of Behaviour**

- The society will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work might be carried out in a public area, or in a designated room with a door open.
- In the case of young people and children aged under 16 who form part of the stage crew, parents or guardians will be informed by standard consent form (Appendix 4) that their child will be working without a chaperone and their agreement will be obtained.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she may be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure.

## **Physical Contact**

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.

- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

### **Photographic Permission and Social Media**

- Members and Volunteers must not take photos of participants/children and young people on personal devices including phones and cameras.

If recordings or photographs are required to be taken, dedicated, secure and encrypted equipment will be used; content will be stored safely and securely and images/footage will only be captured of children who have provided consent.

- Members must not use images of children and young people, for personal use or promotion i.e. on social media.
- Audience members and parents/carers attending 'sharings' of children's work are only permitted to take photographs or videos of performances if permissions are obtained for all children participating, and parents are asked not to share these via any social media platform.

The Carver Theatre recognises the importance of true fully-informed consent and understands that we may encounter vulnerable children whose whereabouts needs to be protected.

### **The Lead Chaperone must inform all children and parents that no photography is permitted in any of the dressing rooms.**

- Photographs taken during workshops, rehearsals or during productions which are to be uploaded to the internet for publicity purposes, are only permitted with parental permission. (Child up to the age of 16 – parental permission required) 16 years and over – young person agreement required.
- Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes (Appendix 4).
- The society's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- The society will ensure confidentiality to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures.

### **Accidents and illness**

In the event of a child suffering an accident or becoming unwell:

An appropriate adult trained in first aid will establish if further action needs to be taken and will put those measures in place.

- First Aid Kits are located around the building as detailed in our Health and Safety Policy.
- In most cases, injuries sustained can easily be treated by the first aider. If this is not the case the first aider will promptly contact the emergency services and the responsible parent/guardian and will ensure that the child is comforted until further help arrives.
- Details of all accidents are entered in an accident book

## Accidents

- To avoid accidents, Chaperones and children will be advised of “house rules” regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.
- If a child is injured while in the care of the society, the Lead Chaperone or their deputy will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the Society’s Accident Book. The Lead Chaperone or deputy will discuss the incident with the child’s parent or guardian as soon as possible.

## Chaperones

- Chaperones will be appointed by the society for the care of children during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in loco parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the Chaperone’s care shall not exceed 12.
- Potential chaperones will be required to complete and sign a declaration of suitability. (Appendix 6)
- Chaperones will be made aware of the society’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care. If unsupervised access is unavoidable a criminal record disclosure may be sought.
- Where Chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the Director of the production. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily, the Chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- If a Chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the Chaperone must inform the Director of the production and not allow the child to continue.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act, no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting.
- During performances, the Lead Chaperone or their deputy chaperones will be responsible for meeting children in the Theatre Library and signing them into the building using the Stage Door Register –( Appendix 7)
- If a child is expected at the theatre but has not appeared 15 minutes after the due time then the Chaperone will contact the parents to inform them.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.
- Members of the stage crew who are aged under 16 will report to the Stage Manager on arrival in the theatre.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.

- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms unless necessary.
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the theatre and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the Society.
- If someone different is to collect the child the details must be noted on the Stage Door Register (Appendix 7). If somebody different from this comes to collect the child, who is not the parent or guardian, then a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting using the Stage Door Register (Appendix 7).
- Children are not to leave the theatre unsupervised by Chaperones unless in the company of their parents or if age 11+ (have reached the age of 11 by the preceding 1<sup>st</sup> of September) with the standard written permission of their parent or guardian (Appendix 8). This applies to cast, chorus and stage crew.

If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the Lead Chaperone to stay with that child or make arrangements to take them home.

## **Suspicion of abuse**

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of the Society, please make this known to the Lead Chaperone. If you suspect that the Lead Chaperone is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to The Designated Safeguarding Lead. If this is not possible, concerns should be reported to the Chairperson of the Society.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response in case there is follow-up in which you are involved. (Using the Cause for Concern Record Form – Appendix 5)
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of the Society, Chaperone, volunteer etc., that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children in the production.

## **Disclosure of abuse**

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the Lead Chaperone or Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.

Tell the child what you are going to do next.

- Speak immediately to the Lead Chaperone or DSL, as appropriate. It will be the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record. (Using the Cause for Concern Record Form – Appendix 5).



## **Types of Abuse**

The following are the types of abuse covered under this policy:

- a) **Physical Abuse:** Any form of intentional physical harm or injury inflicted on an individual, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, or using excessive force.
- b) **Emotional Abuse:** Any behavior that causes emotional distress, mental anguish, or fear, such as constant criticism, humiliation, intimidation, or isolation.
- c) **Sexual Abuse:** Involves any non-consensual sexual act, harassment, exploitation, or inappropriate behavior, including sexual assault, rape, or indecent exposure.
- d) **Neglect:** Failure to provide adequate care, attention, or support to meet an individual's basic needs, leading to physical or emotional harm or endangerment.
- f) **Discriminatory Abuse:** Treating individuals unfairly or differently based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, disability, or sexual orientation, leading to harm or disadvantage.

## **Recording**

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken e.g. suspension of an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

## **Criminal Record Disclosures**

- If the society believes it is in its best interests to obtain criminal record disclosures for Chaperones or other personnel, it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required. An Enhanced Disclosure may be required for anyone with unsupervised access.
- The society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is kept confidential, being known to only the Chairperson, the Juniors Secretary and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and not misused.